

**Probation Committee
Judicial Conference of Indiana**

September 11, 2002
Minutes

The Probation Committee of the Judicial Conference of Indiana met at the Fort Wayne Hilton, in conjunction with the Annual Meeting of the Judicial Conference, on Wednesday, September 11, 2002 from 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

1. Members present. The following members of the committee were present: Kathleen T. Coriden, Douglas R. Bridges, Daniel Vanderpool, Wayne Steele, Thomas Perrone, David Whitton, Thomas Gray, and John Surbeck, chair.
2. Recognition of outgoing members. Judge Surbeck recognized Mary Harper and Diana LaViolette as outgoing committee members, and thanked them for their service to the committee.
3. Board of Directors action on salary proposal. Judge Surbeck reported that the Judicial Conference Board of Directors met on September 10, 2002 in Fort Wayne. Judge Surbeck presented the Board with the committee's recommendation for increases to the minimum salary schedule for probation officers. After a lengthy and lively discussion on the proposed changes, the Board voted 18-4 (with one abstention) to adopt the committee's recommended changes to the minimum salary schedule. The Board made it clear that funding for the increases was a concern and requested the committee to explore funding sources. Judge Gray recommended looking at the existing statutes concerning probation user fees and legislation introduced in 2001. He also suggested looking for House and Senate sponsors for legislation drafted by the committee. The committee agreed that it would look at user fees and a new administrative fee as possible funding sources. The committee requested that staff gather information from surrounding states concerning probation user fees, collection rates for Indiana probation departments. Additionally, the committee requested that staff contact the Association of Indiana Counties and the Association of Indiana Cities and Towns for support on finding sources of funding.
4. Rewrite of probation officer examination. Bob Champion reported that he would be rewriting the examination for prospective probation officers. Judge Bridges, Judge Vanderpool and Judge Whitton will review and approve the rewrite of the test.
5. Probation officer ethics. Bob Champion reported that he recently learned of a scholarship program sponsored by Correctional Management Company, a provider of juvenile residential and detention services and owner/operator of Kokomo Academy and Ladoga Academy. The scholarship program is open only

for the children of probation department employees and welfare department employees. A probation officer concerned about the ethical implications of the program asked Mr. Champion to look into it. He discussed the program with Meg Babcock, counsel for the Judicial Qualifications Commission. Ms. Babcock was of the opinion that probation officers accepting the scholarship money from a provider of detention/residential services would create the appearance of impropriety and violate the Code of Judicial Conduct. The committee members agreed that probation officers who participate in the scholarship program violate the ethical standards for probation officers. The committee requested that this scenario be discussed with probation officers at annual orientation sessions and regional meetings.

6. Orientation. Bob Champion reported that a probation officer who recently failed the probation officer examination has asked to attend the orientation scheduled for October 1-4. Mr. Champion explained that persons who fail the exam cannot serve as probation officers and must wait 90 days to re-take the exam. The committee discussed the requirement that only probation officers in their first year of employment qualify to attend the orientation. The committee voted to disallow probation officers who fail the exam from attending orientation because they are not probation officers during the 90-day waiting period. The committee also voted to toll the time period for attending orientation (one year from date of employment) during the 90 days that a person cannot work as a probation officer after failing the probation officer examination.
7. Regional meetings. Bob Champion reported that the regional meetings for probation officers would be held on the following dates: November 7, 2002 (Valparaiso), November 8 (Ft. Wayne), November 13 (Lebanon), November 14 (Columbus), and November 15 (Jasper).
8. Next meeting. The next meeting of the Probation Committee is scheduled for October 18, 2002 at 1:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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